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HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT

Tuesday, August 16, 1932.

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

Subject: "Housekeeping Odds and Ends." Information approved by the Bureau of Home Economics and the Bureau of Agricultural Engineering, U.S.D.A.

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Odds and ends--that's what we have on the program today. Please don't ask me to stick to one subject this morning for my head is crammed with so many different bits of news, little interesting and helpful ideas I've picked up here and there lately.

"Little drops of varnish, little dabs of paint--these," declares my Next-Door Neighbor, "can add a lot to the convenience of the house."

My Neighbor has an idea that paint can be useful as well as ornamental. For example, take the case of her dark closets. Unfortunately, her house was built with several dark windowless clothes closets, upstairs and down. Of course, that made them inconvenient. You know how annoying it is to feel around in the dark trying to find the right dress or the right pair of shoes. Well, my neighbor painted both the walls and woodwork of those windowless closets a gloss white. Such a finish catches and reflects every bit of light so it made the closets much more convenient.

Did you ever think of painting the inside of the drawers in your bureau or your kitchen cabinet? Try it. A layer of paint will save you the trouble of lining all your drawers with paper. And it makes cleaning easy. A smooth painted surface is easy enough to wash out or dust.

Now here are a couple of economy ideas about varnish. That space behind the kitchen range--try painting the wall there with three coats of water-proof varnish. You can wash off in a jiffy any spots splashed on the wall from the stove if you have applied a coat of varnish.

Another varnish suggestion came from a man who sells luggage. He told me the other day that a coat of hard varnish improves the appearance of fiber composition trunks and also makes them wear longer. That's a tip for the traveler.

Before we leave this subject of paint and varnish, let me tell some facts that the engineers in the Bureau of Agricultural Engineering have discovered



about the color of paint. They have been studying surface temperatures of refrigerator cars to determine an economic distribution of insulating material to the walls, floor and roof. Now they announce that light-colored paints on roofs of refrigerator cars cause a reduction of heat absorption. Tests show that outside surface temperatures of a car and the resulting heat penetration into the car were considerably affected by the sun's radiation and by the color of the paint used on the roof, sides and ends. The tests also show that the difference between air and surface temperatures for stationary car is about twice as great as for moving cars.

Under like conditions of radiation and exposure to sunshine, tests showed that car surfaces painted red are hotter than those painted yellow but cooler than those painted black.

These engineers are just backing up scientifically what we women have known a long time about color. Didn't we discover years and years ago that black dresses were hot for summer wear and so were red?

But we housewives may never have considered the color of paint from the standpoint of economy. The specialists say that unless your walls are good reflectors and your lights well placed, you aren't getting your money's worth of electric light, in such rooms as kitchens and bathrooms. Light walls cut down the electric light bill by reflecting back into the room a large amount of the light which reaches them. For this reason it is really costly to paint a kitchen a dark color as many women do to save work in cleaning. You'll find it cheaper to paint the walls a light tint which you can wash and easily refinish if they become too soiled. Of course, shiny paint gives the greatest reflection, but the glare is often hard on the eyes. Semi-gloss paint is satisfactory for kitchen walls for it doesn't cause a glare.

The most comfortable and efficient artificial light is like daylight. This means that it should be diffused over all parts of the room and should not cast shadows. Probably the most satisfactory fixture for most kitchens is a single central light with a semitransparent globe placed near the center of the room and close to the ceiling. If the room is long and narrow, you may need two ceiling lights. It is sometimes convenient to have additional small bracket lights above work centers such as the sink and table. Of course, these lights shouldn't shine in the worker's eyes or throw her shadow on her work.

One housekeeper writes me that she has made her kitchen drawers convenient by setting in small partitions of wallboard. In the drawer to her kitchen table, these neat little partitions which she cut out and put in herself, keep her knives forks and spoons separate.

Do you have trouble with damp salt this weather, salt that won't come out of the shaker no matter if you shake for dear life? You'll find it a help to keep a dry tumbler upside down over the salt shaker to keep the salt dry between meals.

The other day I went down to see a young housekeeper who lives in a tiny little apartment. Her kitchen is also tiny, so small that doors on her cupboards would be badly in the way. So what do you think she uses instead of doors? A window shade which makes a curtain for her cupboards. It is painted a soft green to match the rest of her kitchen, so it's both ornamental and convenient. Such a curtain is helpful also on shelves where you keep canned fruit. It prevents the fruit from fading in the light.





Before you throw away a pair of old gloves, better consider your hands. Rough, stained hands aren't necessary marks of the housekeeper, though, dear knows, plenty of housekeepers have them. Why not protect your hands and keep them attractive by wearing old gloves to do the housework and by using long handled tools?

Before you go at the dusting or cleaning, slip on an old pair of leather or cotton gloves. If you're doing heavy work in the cellar or the garden, a pair of heavy cotton gloves with knitted cuffs will offer better protection. Then, when you are washing dishes or preparing vegetables, get out the rubber gloves to save your hands. Rubber gloves are very low in price these days.

Long handled household tools also spare your hands. When you are cleaning the kitchen floor, a long-handled self-wringing mop is preferable to a scrubbing brush. Brushes with long handles are better for cleaning vegetables and even the sink. They keep your hands out of water and away from scouring powders better than brushes which you must grasp by the flat wooden back.

For stained hands, that old-time bleach-lemon juice, is as good as anything. A little bottle of hand lotion kept in the corner of a kitchen shelf will keep your hands soft if you remember to put it on when you have finished with some washing job. Whenever your hands are rough or chapped as in winter rub the hands with cold cream and wear an old pair of gloves to bed. This may sound funny, but gloves keep the cold cream on your hands and off the bed clothes.

Here are some other housekeeping ideas contributed by my good friends:

Have you two darning balls in your mending basket? A lady I know says that she saves her eyes by using a dark-colored darning ball for her light hose and a light one for dark hose.

To save time when you are cooking eggs for breakfast, get out your wire sieve or basket. Lower the eggs into the hot water in this sieve and lift them out the same way when they're done.

"My, My", Arabella, have you returned to second childhood?" I asked, when I saw a young friend of mine pulling what looked like a child's cart around her kitchen while she mopped the floor.

"Not I," said Arabella. "This is a labor saving invention of mine-- a cleaning cart."

I examined this cart. It was nothing but a small board on small wheels or casters with a string to draw it around. On this Arabella set her mop pail while she drew it from place to place.

One more little suggestion before we say good-bye. If you have a large piece of cheese which you want to keep for some time and prevent moulding, spread melted parafin over the cut side. That will seal it up effectively and will be easy to remove when you want to use the cheese.

Tomorrow: Appetizers and cocktails for summer meals.

